

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-13

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DEPT PASS BAGHDAD, CAIRO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, BD, IN, PK

SUBJECT: INDO-BANGLADESH TALKS CONCLUDE

1. BEGIN SUMMARY FEBRUARY 15, INDIAN EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER
SARDAR SWARAN SINGH ENDED THREE DAYS OF DISCUSSIONS WITH
BDG. ALTHOUGH A BROAD RANGE OF ISSUES WERE ADDRESSED,
THE TALKS FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE DELHI AGREEMENT, AND PARTICULARLY ON THE RELATED
PROBLEMS OF BD PARTICIPATION IN THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE
AND PAK RECOGNITION. SINGH'S VISIT WAS ACCOMPANIED
BY EXTENSIVE PRESS COVERAGE LINKING HIS TALKS TO
DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY IN THE SUBCONTINENT AND THE
MIDDLE EAST. BOTH SINGH AND BDG FOREIGN MINISTER KAMAL
HOSSAIN, WHO PRONOUNCED THEIR COUNTRIES IN COMPLETE
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AGREEMENT ON ALL BASIC ISSUES, MAINTAINED THAT

FUTURE TRIPARTITE TALKS IN THE SUBCONTINENT MUST BE IN ACCORD WITH THE DELHI AGREEMENT; I.E., FOLLOWING PAKISTANI RECONGITION OF BANGLADESH. THEY SIGNIFICANLY AVOIDED ACCUSING PAKISTAN OF FOOT DRAGGING ON ANY ISSUE AND SIDE STEPPED PREDICTIONS ON THE TIMING OF A TRIPARTITE MEETING. SINGH DISCUSSED MUJIB' VISIT TO INDIA BUT TOLD NEWSMEN THAT THE DATES WERE NOT YET FINALIZED. THE VISIT MAY TAKE PLACE IN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS. KAMAL HOSSAIN ALSO DEPARTED FEBRUARY 15 FOR IRAQ AND PERHAPS OTHER MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRIES. BEFORE HE LEFT HE INDICATED EGYPT'S SADAT MAY VISIT BD ON OR ABOUT FEBRUARY 27. END SUMMARY

2. SUBCONTINENT SETTLEMENT - BOTH IN MINISTERIAL PRESS CONFERENCE AND THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE HIGHLIGHTED THE PRINCIPAL ISSUE OF THE INDO-BENGALIEE TALKS - SUBCONTINENT SETTLEMENT AND PAK RECONGITION. BOTH SIDES REAFFIREMED THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE PROCEDURES OUTLINED IN THE NEW DELHI AGREEMENT, TO WIT, PAKISTAN MUST RECONGIZE BANGLADESH BEFORE WAR CRIMES TRIALS ARE DISCUSSED. SINGH REMINDED INTERVIEWERS FEB 14 AND 15 THE TRIALS ISSUED WAS ONE THAT ONLY BANGLADESH COULD ADDRESS, POINTING OUT HOWEVER THAT BOTH NATIONS HAD A RESPONSIBILITY FOR RESOLVING OUTSTANDING SUBCONTINENT PROBLEMS, INCLUDING THE "FATE OF WAR CRIMINALS". HE REFUSED TO SPECULATE ON THE TIMING OF FUTURE TALKS BUT SAID THAT THEY COULD BE HELD AT ANY LEVEL. ASKED IF PAKISTAN WAS BACKING OUT OT ITS COMMITMENTS UNDER THE DELHI AGREEMENT, SINGH SAID THAT SINCE THE FIRST PHASE WAS STILL BEING IMPLEMENTED, IT WAS NOT YET THE TIME TO COMMENT. HE ALSO SAID THAT INDIA AND BANGLADESH WERE IN UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT ON THE SECOND PHASE OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DELHI ACCORD, A SUBCONTINENT SUMMIT. HE NOTED INDIA HAD NO OBJECTION TO BENGALIEE PARTICIPATION IN THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE.

3. KAMAL HOSSAIN LEFT FEB 15 FOR IRAQ TO DISCUSS THE ISLAMIC SUMMIT AND THE MIDDLE EAST ISSUES WITH THE IRAQI PRESIDENT AND MENTIONED THE POSSIBILITY OF VISITING OTHER MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRIES. HE ADDED BEFORE HIS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DEPARTURE EGYPT'S SADAT MAY VISIT BANGLADES ON OR ABOUT FEB 27. HOSSAIN WAS ACCOMPANIED BY THE FOREIGN TRADE MINISTRY'S JOINT SECRETARY, INDICATING THE MINISTER INTENDS TO DISCUSS PETROLEUM SUPPLIES FOR HARD PRESSED BANGLADESH AS WELL AS THE ISLAMIC SUMMIT.

4. FARAKKA BARRAGE - THE JOINT COMMUNQUE NOTED THAT THE QUESTION OF THE FARAKKA BARRAGE HAD ALSO BEEN

ADDRESSED BUT HAD NOT BEEN RESOLVED. FURTHER TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS ARE REQUIRED BEFORE A SETTLEMENT IS REACHED. FOLLOWING A MEETING WITH BDG FLOOD CONTROL MINISTER KHONDAKAR MUSTAQUE AHMED THE DAY BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE, SINGH COMMENTED THAT DETAILED TALKS HAD BEEN HELD IN DELHI LAST YEAR AND THAT ANY SHORTAGE OF WATER COULD BE EQUITABLY SHARED BY BOTH SIDES. NOTING THAT THE LOCATION OF THE BARRAGE WAS OF CONCERN TO BDG EXPERTS, AHMED SAID THAT HAD INDO-PAKISTAN RELATIONS BEEN REIDNDLY, THE BARRAGE WOULD HAVE BEEN LOCATED ELSEWHERE. HE THEREBY IMPLIES, AS WE HAVE HEARD BEFORE, THAT WORKING LEVELS WITHIN THE BDG HAVE MORE SUBSTANTIAL RESERVATIONS OVER FARAKKA THAN THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE ADDRESSED.

5. USGN SPECIAL SESSION - NO MENTION WAS MADE OF THE RECENT ALGERIAN CALL FOR A SPECIAL UNGA SESSION ON THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC SITUATION. BOTH GOVERNMENTS EXPRESSED THEIR HOPE THAT NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES WOULD COOPERATE MORE CLOSELY IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD AND THAT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE BUREAU WOULD WORK OUT REQUIRED PROCEDURES.

6. DIEGO GARCIA - PRIOR BENGALIAN PRESS SPECULATION NOTWITHSTANDING, DIEGO GARCIA APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN DOWNPLAYED. THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER ANGLO-AMERICAN PLANS, OBSERVING THEIR DIEGO GARCIA DECISION AGGRAVATED GREAT POWER RIVALRY, IGNORED UNGA RESOLUTION, AND RUNS COUNTER TO THE ZONE OF PEACE PRINCIPLE. ONLY SWARAN SINGH MENTIONED DIEGO GARCIA IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE, NOTING SIMPLY INDIA AND OTHER NATIONS WISHED TO SEE AN END OF TENSION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN.

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7. MUJIB'S VISIT TO DELHI - NO ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE ON THE DATES OF MUJIB'S VISIT TO DELHI. THE PRESS SPECULATED THE VISIT WOULD TAKE PLACE IN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS. SINGH DID EXTEND A FORMAL INVITATION WHICH MUJIB ACCEPTED.

8. INDO-CHINA - PREDICTABLY THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE REITERATED GOI AND BDG SUPPORT OF THE ARABS BUT UNEXPECTEDLY IT CONTAINED A REFERENCE TO INDO-CHINA. THE TWO GOVERNMENTS EXPRESSED CONCERN FOR CONTINUED VIOLATIONS OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT AND REAFFIRMED THEIR SUPPORT OF VIETNAMESE SELF-DETERMINATION. NO MENTION WAS MADE OF INDO-CHINA IN THE PRESS CONFERENCES.

9. COMMENT: THE SINGH-HOSSAIN DISCUSSION SEEM TO HAVE RECONFIRMED PRIOR BDG-GOI UNDERSTANDINGS THAT PAK RECOGNITION MUST PRECEDE RESOLUTION OF THE 195 ISSUE. REFERENCES BY BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO THE ROLE PAKISTAN HAS PLAYED WERE, HOWEVER, MILD, AND INDICATE THAT NEITHER THE BDG NOR THE GOI BELIEVES THE DOOR IS CLOSED TO RESOLUTION IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THE POSSIBILITY OF A TRIPARTITE SUMMIT WAS LEFT PURPOSELY VAGUE. KAMAL HOSSAIN'S IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE FOR THE MIDDLE EAST SIGNALS BDG INTENT TO ACTIVELY PURSUE A SETTLEMENT, ALBIET ONE ON BENGALIAN AND BY IMPLICATION INDIAN-SUPPORTED TERMS.
NEWBERRY

NOTE BY OCT: NOT PASSED BAGHDAD, CAIRO.

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